



A WEEKLY NON-PARTISAN PAPER FOR THE HOME, FARM, SCHOOL, FACTORY AND FIRE INSURANCE.

AT RALEIGH, N. C.

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#### SHOULD PAY INTEREST.

Governor Jelks, of Alabama, is retiring after a successful administration marked by the introduction of business methods. In his last message to the General Assembly he urges that the State provide public depositories where the surplus funds can remain and the State be paid interest therefor.

This is a wise recommendation. In some States enough money is received as interest on the State's money to pay the expenses of the Treasury and Auditing Departments. For some years the State has "lived from hand to mouth," so to speak, and has not had any surplus funds. But today it has a surplus of about a third of a million dollars and with the increased assessments of next June there will be times when the surplus in the Treasury will be even larger. But, whether large or small, public money put in banks should draw interest and the State should receive it. The same thing is true of county money. When deposited in banks, interest on it should be paid to the county.

The custom of every State Treasurer in North Carolina for a generation has been for the bond of that official to be made by bank officials, and in return the State money has been deposited in the banks of the bankers signing the bond and in other accessible banks. The bond of the State Treasurer ought to be paid for by the State in a surety company and the public money deposited in the banks that will pay four per cent on the balance in their banks.

If the Southern charged 3-4 cents ten years ago when it swore it made less than \$100,000 on the North Carolina railroad, what ought the passenger fare to be now when it swears it earns over a million dollars? A two cent rate on the North Carolina road is so reasonable that nobody can put up a decent argument against it.

There are railroad lawyers and railroad lawyers. Those who simply accept fees and go into the courts to appear for railroad clients are as honorable as lawyers who appear against railroads. It is the railroad lawyer who works politics and legislation against the interests of the people for the railroads who is a menace.

In Tennessee, by legislative enactment, liquor can be sold only in cities having a population of over 15,000. Two bills have been introduced to make it 150,000 population instead 15,000, which would make Tennessee absolutely prohibition. Senator Carmack is chairman of the Anti-Saloon forces in that State.

There is difference of opinion in the House as to whether a special committee is necessary to make investigation of all the affairs of railroads, but little room for differences as to the necessity of reducing rates and compelling better service.

The new way is to convict the trust corporation and acquit the men who control the corporation. Such verdicts are farces. As long as trusts can pay fines when caught, you will break up no trust.

The Corporation Commission has made its first move in the Selma connection case against the Southern. It will move further next week. The connection must be maintained.

It will not take the Legislature long to get the needed facts as to railroad earnings, though some may prefer different methods at arriving at that re-

#### THE GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

The message of no Governor in this generation has been heard in the General Assembly so intently as the one delivered in person by Governor Glenn yesterday. Interest was quickened by reason of the announcement that the Governor would read his message himself and further heightened by the protests to the innovation made in the House by some of the prominent members of that body.

The keynote of the message was optimistic and patriotic. It began with rejoicing in the progress of the State in every department, in expression of gratification in the good government and the clean administration of public affairs. In private affairs and public the State holds an enviable position, and the Governor uses these to counsel such wise action as will continue and multiply these blessings. He points out the need of valuing property at its true value and sums up his discussion of tax assessment with this true maxim: "A fair valuation and a low rate are what are necessary to get more people and outside capital, while a low rate and high valuation frighten away both the homeseeker and capitalist." This naturally leads up to immigration and the Governor recommends that an effective department be added, the \$10,000 funds necessary coming from the funds of the Agricultural Department. He says the present enforcement of vagrancy laws is "a perfect farce" and adds that "Putting these idlers to work will be a great stride toward answering the vexed question as to where labor is to come from." There is need of more folks in North Carolina and the success of South Carolina's recent efforts to secure desirable immigration should encourage North Carolina to make practical efforts to get desirable immigrants. Whether the money should come from the common treasury or from the Agricultural Department fund, as recommended by the Governor, is a matter of much less moment than that proper steps should be taken along conservative and well directed lines to secure a share of the best class of immigrants who are looking for places where they can buy lands cheaply.

The Governor urged the General Assembly not to adjourn until they have reduced railroad rates and made a strong argument for such reduction. In his written message he named a common rate of two and a half cents a mile as the rate he would recommend, but in his extempore remarks he advised that legislators inform themselves and vote for such reduction as would leave a fair return on the money invested. He urged laws that would end so many wrecks and inconvenience people by poor schedules, and the conferring of greater power on the Corporation Commission to see that the law is enforced.

Upon insurance the Governor shows that the State pays out annually over six million dollars in premiums and recommends that legislation be enacted to protect the policyholders. Of course the outside companies ought to be required to invest the net money they get from North Carolina policyholders in State securities and home and foreign companies should be required to give the policyholders fair treatment. The Governor makes two or three specific suggestions which he believes will prove beneficial. He is eternally right when he says "It is not fair for them (the outside companies) to collect and carry away over six million dollars of our money to enrich and build up their home States at North Carolina's expense." The Governor, touching upon the cost of insurance, suggests legislation that would reduce rates. He does not point out specifically how this could be done, but there are ways. So far as fire insurance is concerned, there will never be proper reduction until the Arkansas, or a similar law, is enacted breaking up the fire insurance trust, otherwise known as "the Southern Tariff Association."

Additional legislation to keep young children out of the mills and to educate them is recommended. This is one of the most important matters before the Legislature. No girl under fourteen ought to work in a mill, and no boy under fourteen during the public school term. In this connection the Governor touches upon the question of compulsory education and gives his approval to the wise and conservative compulsory law that State Superintendent Joyner has prepared. It is a mild and needed step to make our public schools reach all the children.

No part of the message contains more practical wisdom than the suggestion for a better enforcement of the criminal law. There is crying need for reforms in the law and in the administration of the law. The recommendation of equalizing the number of challenges ought to be adopted. That measure has been proposed before but has always been defeated. The Governor's argument in its favor is unanswerable. It is good to see, also, that he recommends the Virginia law that permits a jury to be brought from another county in the trial of capital cases. If that law had been on the books, several notorious miscarriages of justice in recent years would have been avoided.

The tribute to the Confederate soldier is brief and admirable and struck a responsive chord in every heart. There is no higher duty than to care for these noble men. This Legislature should do everything possible for them for the good gray line is rapidly thinning. Only this week three Confederate soldiers in the Home passed away and the death rate increases. It will not be many years before these men, who gave North Carolina more glory than any other men in its entire history, will have answered the roll-call in the skies. "Do all we can," says

the Governor, and the people say "amen."

"Take no backward step in the cause of temperance," is the admonition in a brief approval of the good work of the Watts and Ward bills. The dope evil and the cocaine victims and cigarette evil were painted in true colors and vigorous admonition given to stop their ravages by drastic legislation. While favoring separation of youthful criminals from the hardened kind, the Governor advises that a full investigation of the needs of a reformatory be entrusted to a commission to report at the next General Assembly, rather than immediate action.

Upon education the Governor sounds the note of forward. He reviews the work of the educational institutions and urges continued and increasing liberal appropriations to the end that their usefulness may be increased. The best investment the State can make is in educating its sons and daughters. It will pay a larger dividend than any other investment.

The care of the deaf and dumb and blind and insane is treated with appreciation of the State's needs and duty. He puts their case as paramount and recommends generous outlay of money so that no insane person shall remain in a county home, in jail, or in the home of poverty. The necessity that demanded incurring a debt to furnish the new building at the State Hospital at Raleigh is presented and there is no doubt that the action of the Council of State was approved as it was applauded by the whole State at the time. The Revised Code makes superintendents of hospitals all powerful. No act of the General Assembly ever gave them the autocratic power they possess. The Governor sanely recommends that the directors be given back the power that was never by act taken from them and that they be made directors in fact as well as in name of our institutions.

The Governor touches upon two methods that have been suggested to give more room for the State's business. One is to enlarge the capital at a cost of three-quarters of a million dollars, and it is endorsed. There are strong reasons why this should not be done, aside from the cost. The State Capitol is an historic building, and should not be touched by such enlargement as is suggested. The additions look very well on paper, but in granite would turn out to be a blot. The capital square is too small for a larger building and the additional room can be better provided at one fourth the expense by the second plan suggested by the Governor, to wit: the erection of a modern fireproof building on land owned by the State, opposite capital square. There is real need of a fire proof, modern building for the libraries and valuable papers, and its erection would be far wiser than to attempt to enlarge the capital building. Besides, such enlargement would necessitate an issue of bonds and with increased receipts of a million dollars during the coming two years in the State revenues, and a big surplus in the State Treasury, the suggestion of a bond issue is not one that should be carried out.

If our fathers built the Morganton and Goldsboro Hospitals, the A. and M. College, the State Normal and Industrial College, the Deaf and Dumb School at Morganton and enlarged nearly every other institution without a bond issue in days of poverty, what good reason is there why this generation, rich in comparison with the last generation should permit property to be exempt from taxation and fall to pay for the additions to the institutions our fathers built and paid for in their poverty? They did not build and send the bill to us, though they would have had an hundred fold more right to do so than this generation has a right to send a bill on to the next for doing the things that we ought to do for ourselves.

In his written message, the Governor wrote: "It has been wisely suggested that the State authorize the issuing of two million dollars worth of bonds." When the Governor looked in the faces of the legislators, and came to read that sentence he wisely left out the word "wisely." Of course it has been suggested. No legislative body since the time of Hamilton has met without the suggestion of a bond issue. It is so much easier to vote bonds for somebody else to pay than to pay your bills yourself. But the Governor qualified his approval of a bond issue by italics "if the demands require it." The demands can be met without it, and therefore the Governor does not go on record for the suggested two and a half million dollar bond issue. The legislators will, doubtless, prefer to carry out the Governor's recommendations to get all the property on the tax-list at its true value and thereby secure all needed revenue than to go into the bond issuing business at the most prosperous era in the history of the State. And that is statesmanship of the Jefferson type!

Returning to the need of caring for the indigent insane—and all others for pay—the Governor approves the proposed increased expenditures for all three hospitals, and wisely urges the purchase of a large farm adjoining the State Hospital at Raleigh. That land is a necessity. He also wisely recommends that architects inspect the State Prison building to see if it cannot be converted into "an elegant hospital for the epileptic and dangerous insane." That building cost in the neighborhood of half a million dollars and is well constructed. Without spending very much money it could be converted into a hospital for men and this year give accommodation to 800 or 1,000 insane persons, leaving the other institution for the care and treatment of women. The

lands of the prison and the hospital join, and with the purchase of the Grimes farm, and the erection of cottages as needed, the problem of caring for the insane for this generation could be solved without delay. The present building is now idle, for few prisoners are confined in the penitentiary. The penitentiary directors have the means to erect a small prison on a farm. There will never be need of the present magnificent building for the purpose for which it was expected. Its conversion into a hospital for males would give the State at once another institution for the insane that would be finer and could be made quite as desirable as the Central Hospital. The objection that it has been used as a penitentiary is not entitled to consideration, for, when changed and renovated, with attractive grounds, it would be better than any hospital in the South, except the one at Morganton.

Taken as a whole the message is one that will cause the people of North Carolina to contemplate with pride. It breathes deep devotion to the State, evidences zeal to promote its welfare, and bears on its face that the Chief Executive is with patriotic ardor seeking to give North Carolina good government and to advance it in material, moral and educational prosperity.

#### INSURANCE LEGISLATION.

North Carolina pays over six million dollars every year in insurance premiums, life and fire, and over half of that sum goes away from the men who pay it never to return. There is need for legislation and the Legislature ought to give heed to the many good suggestions that have been made. The recommendations of Governor Glenn will, of course, receive full consideration. The Governor of Tennessee, in his annual message, makes recommendations that are copied below for the consideration of legislators and others who are interested in this important matter. We quote:

"Another important question that you are called upon to deal with is the question of fire and life insurance. The question of fire insurance affects our business people more largely than any other question which is the subject of legislation. The insurance companies have grown to be strong and powerful, and it is charged that they have formed trusts and combines for the purpose of arbitrarily fixing premium rates that are unreasonable and excessive. Rates that would yield excessive returns on the financial risks assumed if the business of these companies were conducted on an economic basis.

"The last General Assembly enacted a law forbidding agreements between two or more fire insurance companies, or their agents, looking to the maintenance of special rates on property in Tennessee. The enforcement of this law has already been of much benefit to the people of the State in preventing the imposition of unreasonable rates. This law was designed to deliver our people from the rapacity of an organization of fire insurance companies. It is founded in wisdom and in public policy. The law should be maintained upon our statute books. If there should be any amendment to it, that amendment should be to make it more effective in preventing the purpose sought in the original act.

"Our present law with reference to mutual fire companies is imperfect and should be amended so as to encourage the maintenance of the principle of mutuals and mercantile mutuals throughout the State. The law on the statute books requiring that all policies shall be countersigned by an agent in the State, who shall receive the full commission thereon, should be repealed, or at least amended, so as to eliminate that part requiring that the agent in the State shall receive the full commission, for the reason that in its practical operation it has the effect of preventing our citizens from making advantageous contracts outside the State.

"The Legislature should give consideration to the matter of amending our present building laws with a view to decreasing the losses by fire on property in the State and any other matter which would have that effect, but I earnestly urge that the onus should not be placed on the policyholder.

"The developments of the last two years resulting from the investigation and exposures in some of the great life insurance companies have made imperative the necessity of enacting legislation that will safeguard holders of life insurance policies from imposition from which they have suffered in some of the great companies.

"The regulation of annual apportionment and accounting by life insurance companies, both as to future policies and past policies.

"The prohibition of diversion of funds for political purposes.

"Requiring policies to contain the entire contract.

"Regulation of salaries and limiting the amount of salary that may be paid any one person to a certain minimum amount.

"Regulation of disbursements.

"Requiring that items be reported in the annual reports of insurance companies.

"In addition to measures recommended by the committee, I recommend the recommendation of the Insurance Commissioner of Tennessee that an act be passed requiring companies to invest within this State a ratable percentage of the funds held by the policies held by citizens of the State."

#### AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION BETWEEN CORPORATIONS.

The most important thing for legislators and people to remember during the progress of this session is the distinction between corporations. That difference has not always been clear, in fact, it has been deliberately obscured. The agents of railroads, of telegraph and telephone companies of every other corporate child of State sovereignty dependent for its existence upon the exercise of eminent domain or franchise from the people, have been busily engaged in confusing the issue. As a result, an act to regulate railroads, to secure to the people a fair share of the profits of enterprise the capital of which is the gift of the State, to prevent extortion and assure fair play, has been hailed as "an attack on corporate interests." In the past some good men have been misled. They have failed to recognize the distinction. They have confused the private corporation, doing business upon its own capital, and paying taxes upon its property like an ordinary citizen, with the public service corporation, which is given rights which fortify it in the exercise of a more or less complete monopoly of public necessity; and which, from the nature of its privileges, is proper subject of State regulation and control in the interests of the people who must trade with it and depend upon its facilities and pay its prices, whether they will or will not. For its success the private corporation depends upon its enterprise and its product; the public service corporation upon the people's necessity. That is a distinction which justifies the widest difference in legislative enactment.

It is important and significant that the present Legislature should have recognized this difference in the matter, even of committees. There is a "committee on corporations," but there is also a "committee on public service corporations." This should not have been necessary; it has been made necessary by the sedulous campaign to confuse the issue, and to raise up that "class antagonism" about which railroad interests are so fond of prating and upon which they so uniformly rely. In past years the appeal has been made not without effect. The cry of "attack on corporations" has been heeded and followed in quarters where it should have been let pass. Cotton manufacturers and furniture manufacturers have in many instances mistakenly made common cause with railroads upon a false assumption. There is nothing, never was anything, in common between the two for the purposes of legislation. The railroad is, in a true sense, a trustee of power which lies alone in the State and which has been leased through charter and franchise. It is proper that such power should be subject to control at the hands of its real possessor. It is a power that, otherwise, is superior to that of ordinary citizens and of ordinary corporations and enterprises. It may well be rashly used. It may well do serious hurt. And yet the cry has been raised—and it will be continued—that regulation of the public service corporation is an attack on all corporations.

We challenge successful contradiction of the statement that there is not now extant or has ever been passed any law in North Carolina which justifies this claim. The State has been and continues to be exceedingly liberal towards all manner of industry undertaken through the medium of private corporations. In encourages their organization and protects them in their rights. It demands no burdensome conditions to their organization. Consistent with the most elementary safeguards which wise legislation throws about any organization for the protection of the individual stockholder, the manufacturing and other enterprises under corporate forms in this State are given as great freedom and are hedged about with as little restraint as is the case in any civilized sovereignty in the world. Between such exercise and the practices of railroads which are sought to be corrected by the control of legislation, there is the fundamental difference of a thing which is authorized and a thing which is given. It must be remembered that the public service corporation operates upon the basis of a gift; the private corporation upon the basis of a right. Both must do equity but the one which is given a peculiar privilege must be held to a public observance.

These are matters which each man will recognize for himself, but which cannot be too strongly impressed. Time was when the army of corporations was made up without distinction, whether they were public or private in character. The manufacturers formed a solid phalanx of offense and imaginary defense with the transportation companies. Now the wisest of those among the manufacturers, among the industrial corporations, are recognizing their mistake. The furniture manufacturers of High Point, who, according to President Spencer were "built" by the Southern Railway, found that they were being hurt more almost than any other class by the neglect and the contempt of that great corporation towards its duty to the public. Other manufacturing enterprises find that their friends, the railroads, are giving them real hurt, where the Legislature has not hurt them at all. They are beginning to catch through experience the view of the ordinary citizen, which, so far as relation to the transportation companies is concerned—they are. And, so seeing, they see the difference, which they feel.

This is well. The distinction cannot be too strongly emphasized. Let it be thoroughly understood that, where the State has granted particular privilege, it will expect and exact service in proportion and benefits in proportion.

What the Governor of North Carolina said to the Governor of South Dakota printed in this paper yesterday has the right ring.

tion; that to the particular privilege will not be added peculiar exemption, either from duty or from law. In this reform the private manufacturer may well join. So far from being an ally of the public service corporation, he is the chief sufferer through its mismanagement and corruption. More than all others, he should approve of its proper control. Realizing this, he should and we believe may be depended upon, to emphasize a distinction where the railroads have sought to make common cause.

#### SUBSIDIZED NEWSPAPERS.

The newspaper is the people's forum. It alone furnishes them with the news and, if it suppresses material portions of the news, the people will be denied the facts as they are. If the newspaper, by comment or declension, conveys a false impression, the public will get a one-sided and prejudiced view. Therefore the freedom of the press is essential to good government. In the days of Jefferson he had to wage war against the control of the press by public officials and the imprisonment of editors by judges whose conduct was criticized by their papers. It was largely because of the attempt to muzzle the press in the Adams administration that Jefferson triumphed and he enforced the constitutional guarantee of a free press.

A century ago the fight was for a free press that could speak out untrammelled and without fear. That fight has been fought and won. The last attempt of a Federal judge to restrain official power to muzzle the press was signally rebuffed in North Carolina. Today the fight is for a free press unsubsidized and uninfluenced by "the interests" that desire special privileges in legislation or immunity from punishment for the violation of law. Long ago the trusts and the railroads saw the powerful influence of the press, and determined to control a portion of it to make public sentiment against enforcing laws equally. They have established some newspapers and bought others; they have bought editorial pages and news columns; and have sought to create public sentiment in their favor. Sometimes no secret is made of railroad and trust ownership of newspapers, but as a rule agents are selected who deny that they represent "the interests." It is in the last class that do the most injury and are the most contemptible.

In his message to the Legislature the Governor of Tennessee touched upon this evil in the following words:

"It is agreed that one of the best methods of regulating the conduct of corporations, trusts and combines, is to have them make public the amount of money invested, all salaries and emoluments of their officials and directors, their discriminations and the profits made and dividends declared. This policy should be made through the press of the State, and it is absurd to say that the corporation whose conduct is to be given to the public should be permitted to own or control the vehicle through which the information is to be conveyed to the people. Therefore, I recommend that you enact a law inhibiting railroads and other public service corporations, their directors, agents and representatives from owning newspapers. A law that would authorize the railroads and other public service corporations to own or control newspapers could not be defended on the grounds of public policy, and a policy that permits such corporations to exercise such privileges without authority of law is ultra vires and contrary to a sound public policy and should be prohibited."

In the bill regulating railroad rates passed at the last session of Congress it was provided that no railroad could own or operate a coal mine, and the whole world applauded that wise step. Congress should have gone further and provided that no railroad should go into the real estate or lumber business or transact any other business except transporting freight and passengers. It is often to the ride-lines that the funds are diverted that ought to be employed in giving the public good service.

In North Carolina it was formerly the law that no railroad could own more than three hundred acres of land. It was repealed or dropped out of the laws without any discussion and without any knowledge of the general public. Governor Glenn in his message recommends the re-enactment of that old law.

If it is proper to say that a railroad cannot own more than three hundred acres of land, why is it not proper also to say that it shall not own stock directly or indirectly in a newspaper? Certainly the ownership of 5,000 acres of land could not be so injurious as the use of money paid by shippers and travellers to subsidize newspapers which try to make the worse appear the better reason. If the Southern Railway had all the money it has spent in the Raleigh Tribune and Raleigh Post, for example, and other subsidized sheets, it would have enough cash to run a special Selma connection train for a whole year.

The public service corporation that does not adhere strictly to the purposes for which it was chartered, and that demands the right to buy politicians and subsidize newspapers should be denied the right of eminent domain. The Democratic State platform said that activity by public service corporations should be made "odious" and subsidizing newspapers by such semi-public corporations should be made illegal, and prevented by suitable legislation.

Many of the same questions involved in the Selma connection case came up in the Florida case, in which the Supreme Court upheld the authority of the Florida Railroad Commission. That decision seems to forecast the action of the court in upholding the North Carolina Corporation Commission.

So far nobody has introduced an anti-trust bill. It needs to be done with great care, to put the duty of enforcing it on the Attorney General and solicitors, and to have teeth.

#### LIMIT FIXED AT SIXTEEN HOURS.

The people are determined to put an end to those wrecks caused by over working the employees. Senator La Follette's success in passing his bill limiting the hours of employment of railroad employees passed the Senate by a unanimous vote, except the vote in opposition cast by Senator Peñas. From the day that Mr. La Follette entered the Senate he has been fighting for the measure to protect life and prevent over working railway employees. It was vigorously opposed at first by many Senators and others quickly expected to help bury it, but they did not properly estimate the persistence and the determination of the Wisconsin Senator. He is the sort of man who, when he is engaged in a measure, thoroughly informs himself and stands by it because he believes it is right, and having a strong conviction, in this day the only hope of accomplishing anything, with ability is to fight for it and stand up to the last day after day, even in the face of opposition. Ability to do this is the difference. Ability to do this is what Mr. La Follette's strong belief is.

Speaker Justice, now introduced a bill in the North Carolina Legislature limiting the hours that railroad employees may be on duty. The La Follette bill having passed the Senate of the United States, the Justice bill in its essential features should, and doubtless will, pass the North Carolina Legislature, thus giving the same protection in intra-State traffic as Congress gives in inter-State transportation. Because of its importance we append the full text of the La Follette act:

"That it shall be unlawful for any common carrier by railroad in any territory of the United States or in the District of Columbia, or any of its officers or agents, or any common carrier engaged in interstate or foreign freight or passenger service, or any of its officers or agents, to require or permit any employee engaged in or connected with the movement of any train carrying interstate or foreign freight or passengers to remain on duty more than sixteen consecutive hours, or when by casualty occurring after such employee has started on his trip or by unknown casualty occurring before he starts on his trip, and except when by accident or unexpected delay of trains scheduled to make connections with the train on which such employee is serving, he is prevented from reaching his terminal, or to require or permit any such employee who has been on duty sixteen consecutive hours to go on duty without having had at least eight hours of sleep, or to require or permit any such employee who has been on duty 16 hours in the aggregate in any 24-hour period to continue on duty without having had at least eight hours of sleep within each 24-hour period.

Punishable by Fine.

"That any such common carrier or any of its officers or agents violating any of the provisions of this act is hereby declared to be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000, and it shall also be the duty of the Interstate Commerce Commission to fully investigate all cases of the violation of this act and to lodge with the proper district attorney information of such violations as may come to its knowledge.

"That to enable the commission to execute and enforce the provisions of this act it shall have the power to employ such inspectors and other persons as may be necessary.

"To enforce the provisions of this act the commission and its agents or employees throughout the United States in order of said commission shall have the power to administer oaths, take testimony, take depositions, and to enforce the production of books and papers. The commission may also order depositions taken before any officer in any State or Territory of the United States or in the District of Columbia qualified by law to take the same.

"The provisions of this act shall not apply to relief or wreck trains."

#### DO WE BELIEVE IN CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

Do the people of North Carolina believe in capital punishment? Do we think any man ought to be hung?

Theoretically most people will reply by saying that they do believe that for the crimes of murder, rape and arson, and for burglary of a residence, the punishment ought to be death. But, judged by action, are they not deceiving themselves? Is it not the fact that, because deep down in their hearts most people are opposed to capital punishment, that a man charged with crime for which hanging is the penalty can often escape all punishment upon the most flimsy testimony? If the penalty were life imprisonment or a long term of years, does anybody believe there would have been so many acquittals last year in cases where the public believed the accused was guilty? This is worth thinking about.

In Alabama the situation is about like it exists in North Carolina. There was recently much adverse criticism because a man sentenced to be hung and about to be taken to the gibbet, was saved by the interference of his boss corps. In his message to the General Assembly, Governor Jelks, referring to that case, said:

"The imposition of a sentence to hanging, as disclosed by the record, and the excitement which the possible hanging of this man created among respectable people, leads me to the conclusion that the hanging of white men in Alabama is almost an impossibility, and inclines me to suggest to you that probably it would be well to allow the law to declare against capital punishment except in case of an offense against women. It is monstrous to allow a law to stand which is operative only against one class of our citizens."

Plenty of bills to reduce railroad rates are being introduced. The legislators seem to be in the same mind of the rest of the people and all looks fair now. But the "miners and seepers" among the railroad advocates haven't yet begun to get in their work.

So far nobody has introduced an anti-trust bill. It needs to be done with great care, to put the duty of enforcing it on the Attorney General and solicitors, and to have teeth.